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A reader will be at loss to understand the course of the events described in Vol. I, p. 521, unless he already knows that Zwentibold was an illegitimate son. The proof-reading is carelessly done in places, Vol. I, p. 454, 114 is correct, not 116; p. 483, Sale, not Salle; Vol. II, p. 310, 1100, not 1110, etc. Mistakes similar to the above are too frequent. Occasionally an open question is decided in a dogmatic manner; *e. g.*, the date of the introduction into Europe of Arabic numerals, Vol. II, p. 193.

But these volumes are valuable, and we wish that they could be reproduced in English at the same price. It is because of the excellence of the whole that we have called attention to the faults in detail. The topics treated are well chosen, the illustrations are apt, and a due proportion is observed in the correlation of the parts. No specialist is allowed to ride his favorite hobby. The usefulness of the work is lessened, however, by the absence of maps and indexes. Genealogical tables are furnished. A very large portion of the volumes is devoted to "Kulturgeschichte." Many important questions of the later period have necessarily been relegated to the third volume. This will probably be of even greater value than those already published for the questions which concerned the life of the people.

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*Il malthusismo e i problemi sociale.* By VITTORIO LEBRECHT, Torini: Loescher, 1893.

This interesting work proposes to examine by the light of scientific criticism the theory of Malthus and the principal objections that have been brought against it. The author turns his attention, first, to pointing out the irrefutability of the biological tendency as Malthus has shown it, and the necessity which devolves upon political economy to recognize it as a fundamental law. Lebrecht does not ignore the objections raised by various writers against this tendency ; on the contrary he estimates them with praiseworthy impartiality ; yet after careful examination he believes that they are not destructive of the theory, and indeed he is hardly disposed to grant that they exert even a modifying influence. He does not deny that the coefficient of procreation is essentially economic and that poverty is one of its potent factors ; yet he affirms that the prolific action of poverty can be remedied by moral influences, which shall check the increment of procreation and adapt it to the sum of subsistence. Lebrecht affirms that the statement of Malthus that population left to itself is doubled in twenty-five years, seems to be confirmed by the example of the United States. Nor,

again, do the opinions of Malthus concerning the limit of the increment of subsistence seem to him to be the result of an excessive pessimism. He recognizes that emigration certainly is of influence in retarding overpopulation, that it does not, however, prevent it. He examines the objections brought by socialists against the Malthusian theories; he observes that some, for instance Marlo, recognize the full importance of the problem of population, while he regrets that others do not consider the question carefully. Schäffle treats it with too great carelessness; Lasalle and Turati do not discuss it all. Bebel speaks too superficially of the population and overpopulation of Germany; Zorli and Colajanni, of more moderate temper, flee before the conclusions that Malthus has drawn. Lebrecht institutes an acute inquiry into the views of all these writers, through which he reaches the following opinion: "To me it seems that Malthusianism ought to act as one of those functions which physiologists call *vicarious*; to which nations should have recourse under certain definite conditions, in certain economic and social events; that is to say, every country should always keep in mind the law of Malthus, applying it, however, only when it is found necessary to do so."

He gives attention then to the sociologists. Into their works and into their criticisms he makes careful inquiry. He studies Darwin's theories, and the celebrated theories of Spencer, who holds that the increase of population tends naturally to decrease as civilization advances; and he shows most excellently that facts contradict the statements, since, for example, in the United States where psychic tension and cerebral activity are very great, procreation is rapid and vigorous. Nor are the doctrines of other sociologists, Morelli, Schäffle, Lilienfeld overlooked. These searching criticisms prepare the way for Chapter III, which discusses the burning questions of Malthusianism in France. He rehearses the demographic conditions of the country, which result in an almost numerical stationariness; for while in Greece the annual increase in population is 19.8 per cent, in France it is but 3.8 per cent. He recognizes at the same time the flourishing economic condition of France, notwithstanding the frequent agricultural, industrial and financial crises through which the country has passed within the last twenty years. He believes that scarcity of population is not disadvantageous from a political point of view, for a small army of well-fed men conquers a large army made up of those that are hungry. Tracing then the causes of the limited procreation of France, Lebrecht observes that by some it is attributed to debility, by others to degeneration or to vice; he combats these various opinions, finding the cause in the neo-Malthusian practices which have been provoked by a desire for preserving a high economic position, or as

Dumont expresses it, by *social capillarity*; and he concludes that this restraint on procreation is essentially beneficent and worthy of encouragement. He studies neo-Malthusianism from a religious, hygienic and moral point of view, and he does not hesitate to recognize its injurious effects and its dangers; he holds that it is, however, the lesser of the evils and that it should be practiced, at least in its most harmless forms, in order to avoid an unrestrained excess of population, the source of great misery. But he considers that neo-Malthusianism should be practiced freely, not enjoined by the law, nor yet by the advice of the State. That the State should restrict itself to a purely economic function in facilitating exchanges and in the colonization of national lands.

Such are, in outline, the contents of this learned and interesting work. In many points I do not agree with the author. A strong opponent of neo-Malthusianism, I believe that overpopulation should be remedied by economic means, not by medical and physiological means. The criticism of my theories made by Lebrecht do not seem to me to be convincing. Yet the different doctrines advanced by us, in various grave questions, take nothing from the estimation in which I hold his book; it is to be judged as a notable contribution to the economic theories which are among the most difficult and the most debated.

ACHILLE LORIA.

[Translated by CORNELIA H. B. ROGERS.]

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*Abraham Lincoln.* By JOHN T. MORSE, JR. American Statesmen Series, 2 vols. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1893.

It is a striking tribute to Abraham Lincoln that interest in him does not lessen the farther we are removed from the scenes in which he was the central figure. Indeed, the wider the distance which separates us from this great character, the more wont we are to give him his true place in the catalogue as the "Supreme American of our History."

Among the many biographies issued, with Mr. Lincoln as a subject, this last will take immediate prominence. Mr. Morse, in his portrayal, has escaped the very natural veneration of the biographers Nicolay and Hay, and at the same time the extreme realism of Herndon.

There is great care manifested with regard to details and the careful arrangement of facts. No writer could have brought Mr. Lincoln's